Fort Myers Notebook, N-86-04-05

This notebook dates from April 1886 and contains notes by Edison to Eli Thompson, who was in charge of preparing the Fort Myers home. All of the notes relate to plantings for the grounds. Included also is a drawing of the layout of the house and grounds. The front cover is labeled "T. A. Edison Memo. Book." The book contains 284 numbered pages.

Blank pages not filmed: 2-3, 46-47, 54-57, 60-284.

Cat. 1208

N-(86-04-05)

Found 11/15/66 in wire cage
in Vault 8.

No 40987
ARTHUR & BONNELL
MANUFACTURER
55 CEDAR STREET
NEW YORK

Mr Thompson - Will require 280 Lighter loads of muck to cover 8 acres 4 inches deep - Each lighter Load 30000 lbs, or 8000 cart loads 1000 lbs Each - or about 1500 5 ton loads on Wood track

We shall want a Bannana Bed about 20 feet square. you can probably buy these, I noticed up by the wind mill on the Island up in the narrow channel of the Caloosahatchee, lots of bananas bushes,

---

Shall want about 1000 pineapple, I believe there are two ways of planting. one of which is longer but ~~surer~~ sure, plant this ~~[illegible]~~ kind — in ~~garden~~ ~~[illegible]~~

ordered them of Montgomery from Key Largo —

Set out ~~towards woods two poinciana~~ Trees, It might be best in cases like this to set out duplicates very close together at the end of a year if both should grow the poorest one can be cut down, This will insure having at least one,

I think we should have a lemon hedge inside fence towards woods, The lemons ~~procurable~~ here seem to be a poor variety — Lime — if you cannot altogether procure the regular except a few Italian lemon shoots else you ~~[illegible]~~ Regular Sicily Lemons raise the slips yourself from seeds found in the lemon we have north you can then you will have to use the lemon + Lime (The Limes seems to be good) procurable here.

I saw near Jacksonville some very fine Pecan trees, please see if you can propagate slips from the nuts procurable from the stores,

also, propagate also soft shell almonds Brazil nuts, Date palm from Dates procurable in stores, English Walnut, Filberts, -

Procure some fig tree slips, and set out about 1/2 dozen - put them out towards the old house as they are an ugly tree, I dont know if there are any fig trees around here if not pe[illegible] you will have to get them from Jacksonville where there is a nursery — Major Evans will tell you about the Nursery there and what you can get there,

As peaches grow in perfection down here, ascertain what period of the year when the *season is not* backward that the peaches ripen if they ripen as early as april 25- or may 1st set them out, perhaps there is an *early* variety 1/2 dozen trees will answer;

What time do grapes ripen here if during our stay which will be here after from January 15 to May 1st - Set same out)

We want a strawberry patch. about. 20 by 100. of best early bearing Strawberries – also garden about 25 Currant bushes, also a bed of Red and Black Raspberries mixed – I think ~~[illegible]~~ a bed about 20 X 100 will do for both,

4 Castor beans — Wild Coral plant
3 – Olives. Lavender Bushes
5 – Jamaca apple
3 – Egg Fruit.
About 10 mangos
" 10 alligator pears, House Landscape
10 Sapidillos
2 Spanish gooseberry

Frierson had one tree last year

4 paw paw trees, Landscape –

6 pomegranates,
2 mulberry native,
2 Custard apple,
I think as many ~~10~~ orange trees of best
as will go on end of House plat will answer
variety will do us on ~~the~~ grounds

as I propose ~~to plant some~~
plant a lot
across the road —
in garden in case we want to transplant

1/2 doz Gauvas if they
bear during our season if not
one will do —

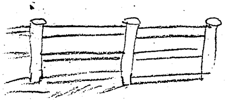
I think you better plant some
peanuts so as to obtain about
3 bushels for our use —
garden

I wonder if plum . pear +
Siberian Crab will grow here
if so put out Couple of each
Landscape -

I will send you from N York
on my arrival Several good
books on floriculture + ~~Horticulture~~
etc, also as soon as possible
Ship you a full ~~Catalogue of~~
assortment of seeds and
bulbs. I think about 1800
Varieties — also will send
you a supply of good garden
truck seeds, the later yours

Can plant at such time as will insure us a good & regular supply for the table during our stay –

I propose to have 4 acres cleared across the road and a board fence put around it thus,



The garden truck & propogating beds can be placed over here, you should set out plenty of Extra slips over there so in Case of a failure on the River side lot of a shoot you can transplant

I suppose Cotton seed will sprout & grow in this part of the Country any time if so plant so we can see some white here say 10 or

15 hills –

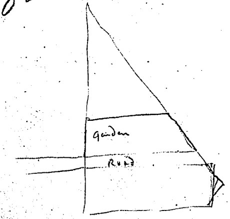
I think perhaps the strawberry bed might go across the road –

You better use some of the Space across road to Experiment with on different fertilizers.

You are authorized to have about 4 acres cleared which I understand –

Man who has charge of the place next to old house will do for $35 per acre

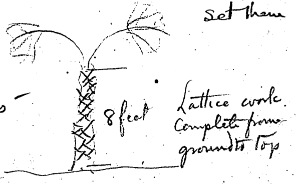
now I want it perfectly Clear of Everything ~~except the large trees~~, even if it costs more — you are also authorized to build a board fence around the whole



I shall send you every kind of grass seeds so you can experiment in small patches in the garden.

Also procure 4 Cabbage palmento. about 8 feet from the ground to where the leafe rods come out

Set them out on grounds


8 feet
Lattice work. Complete from ground to Top

1000

What I desire in the flower line is a few nice ones - of Every variety that I can procure,

you should carefully study the books I send relating to the Care + planting of the flowers,

I will send you about 1000 yards of Common print Cloth, which you can place around the more tender shoots when a freeze approaches This cloth will prevent radiatn

If run through boiled linseed oil & hung out until dry it will prevent radiation almost entirely –

will also ship barrel of boiled oil –

We propose to have our grounds ~~the best manured in florida~~ Therefore you may order for the River grounds, 6 Ton of oil Cake two ton of phosphates, and two Ton of guano – and for the garden 4 ton of Oil Cake – 2 ton phosphate and 4 ton of guano, providing the guano does not cost more than $50 per ton =

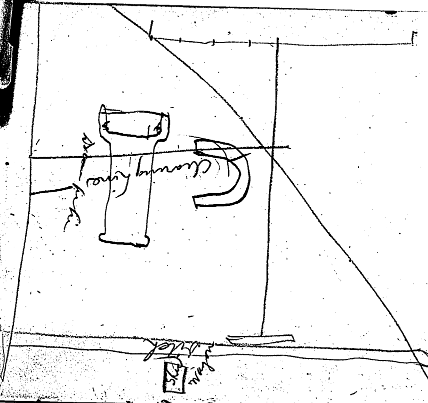
I think you should go back from the river & look for black muck fresh water muck, There are plenty of ponds back of Myers which appear to have black ground you can hire a cart or use the lighter & yacht and get it up the river wheeling it to lighter by Wheelbarrows & line of boards

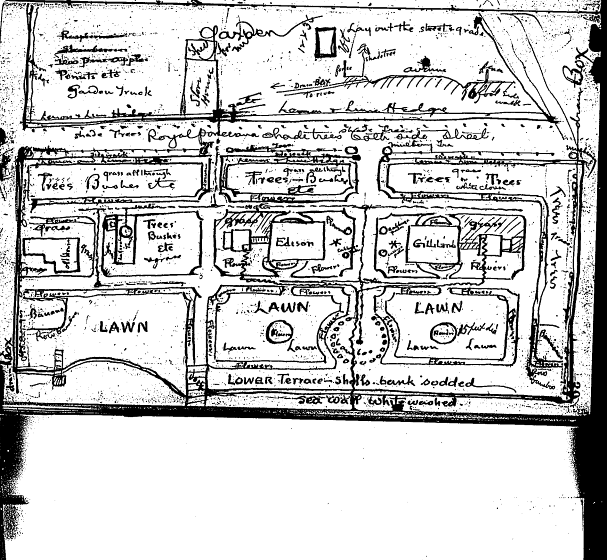
It evidently wants some fine decayed fibrous spongy matter like they are putting in the Coconut holes to hold the manure & prevent it going clear through to China — You can doubtlessly discover a good spot to get it which is accessable dont stint it but procure plenty of it — I want to carry Everything to Extreme Excess down here you will probably have to pay the owner of the ground for it. —

I think you better get
some better shoots of Bamboo
from Major Evans and
plant them keeping them
well manured + watered,

If Cherry trees will grow
put out 2 or 3, Oxheart,
Red etc

2 - grapefruit trees


Wagon Shed
11


Garden
Lay out the street & grade
~~Raspberries~~
~~Strawberries~~
~~Pine apples~~
Penuts etc
Garden Truck
Hedge
Lemon & Lime Hedge
Shed
Store House
gate
Drain BOX
To river
shadetree
fence
avenue
16 foot side walk
Lemon & Lime Hedge
Box
drain Box
shade Trees Royal Ponceana shade trees both side Street,
Shade Trees
mulberry Tree
sidewalk
Lemon and Lime Hedge
Lemon & Lime Hedge
Trees grass all through Bushes etc
Trees grass all through Bushes etc
Trees grass or white clover Trees
Flowers
water
Trees Bushes etc grass
grass
Grass
Edison
Gilliland
Flowers
LAWN
LAWN
LAWN
Flowers
Lawn
Lawn
15 feet dia
Banana
Row Bamboo
Bamboo
Trees
LOWER Terrace—shells..bank sodded
Sea wall whitewashed.
39

Plant in garden about 20 ft square of Tobacco - garden

4 Trees of Japanese plums in House plat

1/2 dozen gooseberry bushes House plat,

2. apricote trees House plat,

2 persimmons "

2 Tarmarind "

2 mulberry trees ~~outside~~
in ~~street as shewn on map.~~

any tropical fruits you
hear of get shoots. if you can,
~~you~~

Among the Oranges get at least
2 Mandarin Orange trees,

2, Green gage plum in House plot

In garden set out a double row sugar can 50 foot long —

Plant in garden dozen hills of poor mans dish rag — its a species of squash plenty at St Augustine,

Want ~~two~~ hives of ~~bees~~ bees over in garden for our flowers, you ~~Can purchase these~~ about 2½ miles from Myers on the river road to Parkinsons or up the river above Parkinsons

350.

350
175
3325

40

400.

525
75
2625
3675
4937

1200, too much

75
600.
45000.
2

40,

30,000, 40,000,

183000
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7320000
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1320000
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1

36 60
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2000

200
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1831000

15 ~~00~~ tons.

15)1200(~~80~~
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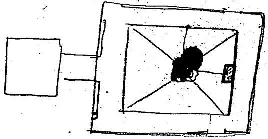
15)1200(80
1200

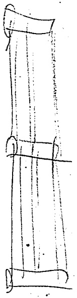
15
80
1200.

80
20
1600

160,

Edison House,





15) 4300 (280
300
130
120
1

8

43000
58
344,000
25
1720000
688000
8600
8000
6000
6

4300
2000
8600000

2000) 1720000 (4300

4

25
9
225

2

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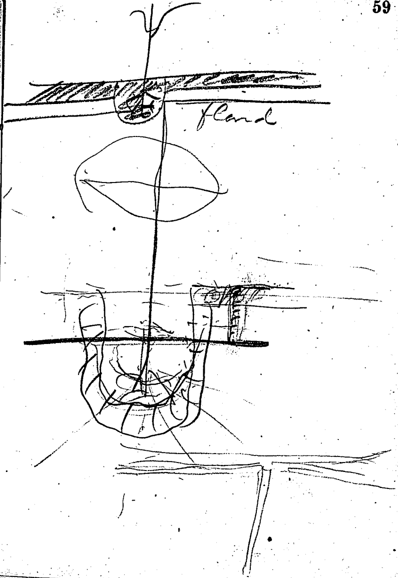
15 ton for Lighter Load –

25 lbs per square foot,

4300 tons,

280 Lighter Loads



gland